

**“Taken from House Report 105-636
FY 1999 House Report...”**

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY

The Committee recommends a total of \$624,184,000 for the appropriations accounts under the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for fiscal year 1999. The recommendation is \$90,857,000 below the budget request, exclusive of advance appropriations, and a decrease of \$53,668,000 below the amount appropriated for fiscal year 1998. In addition, the recommendation does not include requested advance appropriations for FY 2000 through FY 2002 for NIST construction. A description of each account and the Committee recommendation follows:

Scientific and Technical Research And Services

The Committee has provided \$280,470,000 for the Scientific and Technical Research and Services (core programs) appropriation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology. This amount is an increase of \$3,618,000 above the current level and \$11,166,000 below the budget request. The amounts provided in this account reflect the Committee's continuing commitment to funding basic research programs that benefit the nation's industries.

The Committee notes that, in an era of declining budgets, the core programs of NIST have enjoyed significant support, receiving continued program increases. While the Committee has not provided the full amount in program increases requested in the budget, the Committee points out that the Administration's budget proposed to pay for the requested increases out of revenues generated by tobacco settlement legislation, which is outside of the control of this Committee. However, given the importance of NIST core research programs, the Committee has worked to identify additional discretionary funds to support the highest priority NIST research programs.

The following is a breakdown of the amounts provided under this account by activity, reflecting the priorities included in the National Institute of Standards and Technology Authorization Act of 1998 (H.R.1274), which passed the House by voice vote on April 24, 1997:

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Fiscal year 1999

	Base	Request	Recommended
Electronics & Electrical Engineering	36,627	38,627	38,627
Manufacturing Engineering	19,368	19,368	19,368
Chemical Science & Technology	32,493	39,493	32,493
Physics	28,434	28,434	28,434
Material Sciences and Engineering	52,035	51,335	51,335
Building and Fire Research	13,698	16,698	15,698
Computer Science & Applied Mathematics	43,943	43,943	43,943
Technology Assistance	15,131	19,131	15,965
Baldrige Quality Awards	3,070	5,370	5,370
Research Support	29,237	29,237	29,237
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Total, STRS	274,036	291,636	280,470

The recommendation provides full funding for all base activities for the internal research programs of NIST, and includes selected program increases for the highest priority programs. Within the amounts provided, the Committee has included the following program increases: (1) \$2,000,000 for semiconductor metrology; (2) \$2,000,000 to continue the disaster research program on effects of windstorms begun in fiscal year 1998; (3) \$834,000 for increased support for international standards activities; and (4) \$2,300,000 to expand the Malcolm Baldrige program to health care and education. The Committee has not provided requested increases proposed to give NIST new responsibilities related to implementation of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate and Global Change and disaster mitigation, because these proposed activities represent new responsibilities for NIST and are duplicative of activities already conducted by other Federal, State, and local agencies. In an era of fiscal constraint, the Committee has been, and remains, supportive of NIST's critical research function and believes that scarce resources should be targeted to supporting NIST's core research mission. Further, while the Committee has provided an increase to bolster NIST's activities related to international standards, the Committee continues its directive included in previous years regarding the placement of additional NIST personnel overseas or support for foreign service nationals.

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Industrial Technology Services

The Committee recommends \$287,000,000 for the Industrial Technology Services appropriation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology. This amount is \$19,000,000 below the current year appropriation, and is \$79,691,000 below the budget request.

Advanced Technology Program: The Committee provides \$180,200,000 for the Advanced Technology Program (ATP), a decrease of \$12,300,000 below the fiscal year 1998 appropriation, and \$79,691,000 below the request. The recommendation, when combined with \$23,800,000 in excess balances from prior years, will provide a total funding level of \$204,000,000 for the program.

The recommendation provides the following: (1) \$43,000,000 in fiscal year 1999 funds for new awards; (2) \$120,200,000 for continued funding requirements for awards made in fiscal years 1996, 1997, and 1998 to be derived from \$96,400,000 in fiscal year 1999 funding and \$23,800,000 from excess balances available from prior years; and (3) \$40,800,000 for administration, internal lab support, and Small Business Innovation Research requirements.

In addition, bill language is included designating the amounts available for new ATP awards, pursuant to the agreement reached in fiscal year 1997. The Committee reminds NIST that changes to this funding distribution, including changes resulting from carryover, recoveries and project cancellations, are subject to the reprogramming requirements set forth in section 605 of this Act.

The Committee has been frustrated by NIST's continuing inability to accurately project its funding requirements for this program, as evidenced by the \$23,800,000 in excess funds NIST has available which are not necessary to meet current requirements. In a time of fiscal constraint, accurate information is critical. The Committee appreciates the actions taken by NIST and the Department to provide quarterly reports to the Committee of current year deobligations. The Committee requests that such reports be expanded to include quarterly obligation data. In addition, NIST is directed to review the current standard formula used for estimation of mortgages requirements and provide a report to the Committee, not later than February 1, 1999, which includes a comparison of estimated mortgages requirements versus actual requirements for new awards made in each of fiscal years 1994, 1995, 1996, and 1997, as well as recommendations for revisions to the formula which would more accurately reflect true requirements.

Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program: The Committee has

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included \$106,800,000 for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program, the full amount requested. Of this amount, \$98,300,000 is provided for the Regional Centers program, the full amount necessary for continuation of all existing centers, including those centers which have reached their statutory six-year time limit, as well as to continue the existing SBDC-manufacturing field offices at the fiscal year 1998 level. In addition, \$8,500,000 is provided for program administration. While the recommendation does not include the requested increase for program administration, the Committee believes any inflationary adjustments can be absorbed within savings realized through the elimination of the national programs office, as funding for this program was eliminated in fiscal year 1998.

In addition, the Committee recommends bill language, as proposed in the budget, to lift the statutory six-year time limitation for center funding.

Construction of Research Facilities

The Committee recommendation includes \$56,714,000 for construction, renovation, and maintenance of NIST facilities, the full amount requested for fiscal year 1999, and \$38,286,000 below the fiscal year 1998 level. In addition, the recommendation does not include \$115,000,000 requested for advance appropriations for FY 2000 through FY 2002 for this account.

The Committee remains frustrated that NIST and the Administration do not make facilities requirements an integral part of NIST's overall mission requirements and budget priorities. This is once again evidenced by the fact that the budget proposes significant increases for other NIST programs, while forcing NIST to rely on unacceptable budget gimmicks to address facilities needs. In addition, the Committee is disappointed that the report submitted by NIST, as requested by the Committee, failed to undertake a comprehensive review of NIST facilities requirements in light of fiscal realities and changing requirements.

Therefore, the Committee has included bill language again this year, making the \$40,000,000 provided for construction of the Advanced Metrology Laboratory contingent upon submission of a plan for the expenditure of these funds. Such a plan should include an updated, comprehensive review of the requirements for the AML and a realistic funding profile and construction schedule for completion of the project.

This program supports all NIST activities by providing the facilities necessary to carry out the NIST mission. The Institute has proposed a

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multiyear effort to construct advanced technology laboratories and to renovate NIST's current buildings and laboratory facilities in compliance with more stringent science and engineering program requirements.